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THE STUDY OF AN INDUSTRY

The study of textiles starts in the spring with planting the cotton and flax in the school garden. The crop is gathered in the fall at the time of the "County Fair." It is then threshed and retted on the front lawn and later put in storage till January. In the winter term the children scutch the flax, comb it on the heckle, spin it on

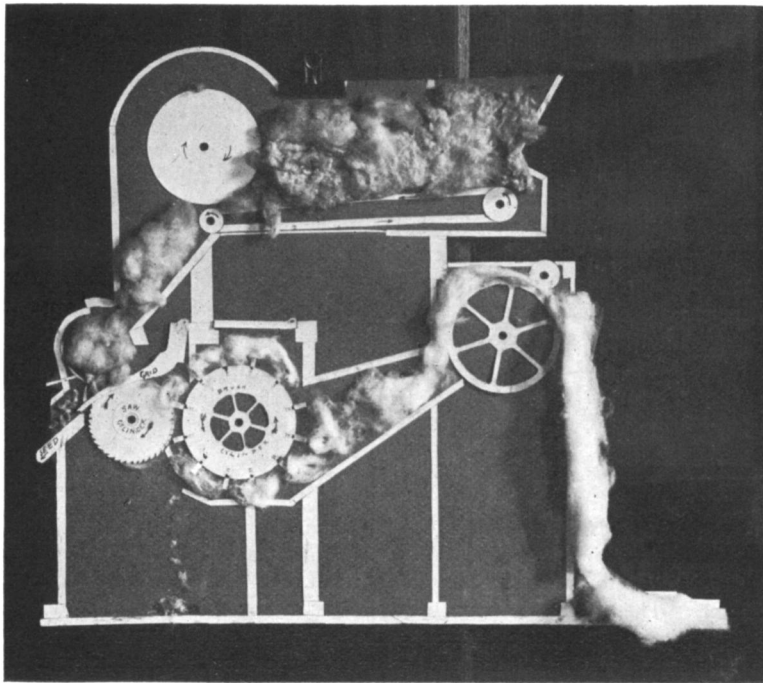


DIAGRAM OF A SAW GIN

the hand-spindles or spinning-wheels, and weave it on the looms. They have made all of these implements except the wheels in the shop under the direction of Mr. Wahlstrom. They card wool and cotton on the hand-cards, prepare warp for the looms on the warping-frame. We have a dozen different styles of looms on which they weave. They

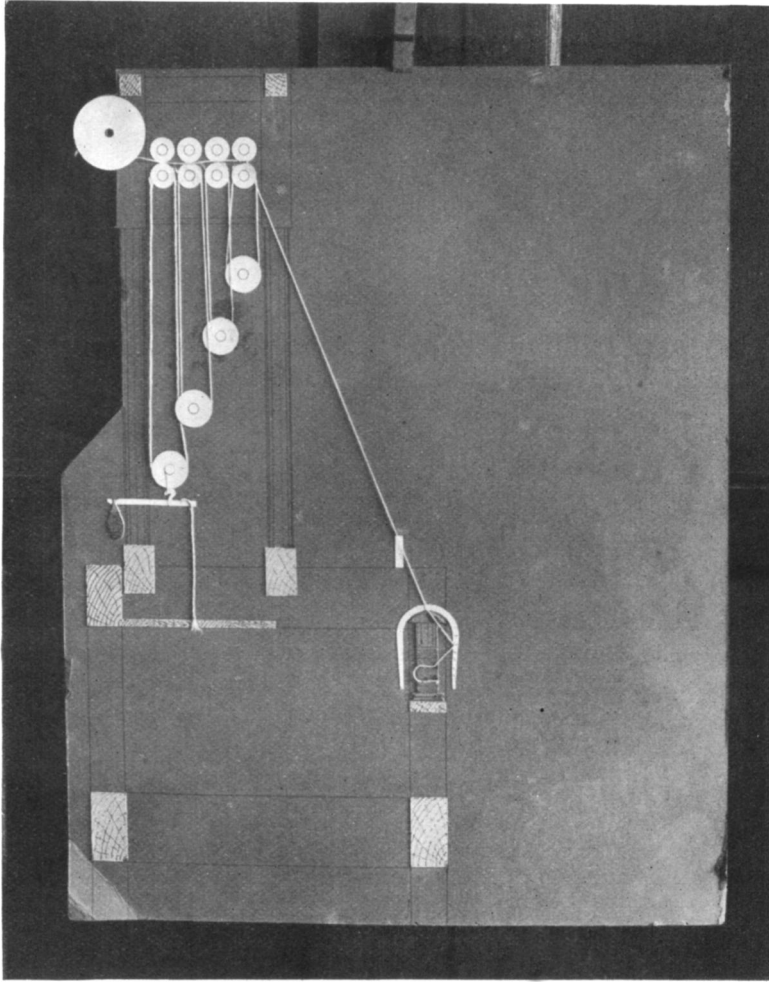
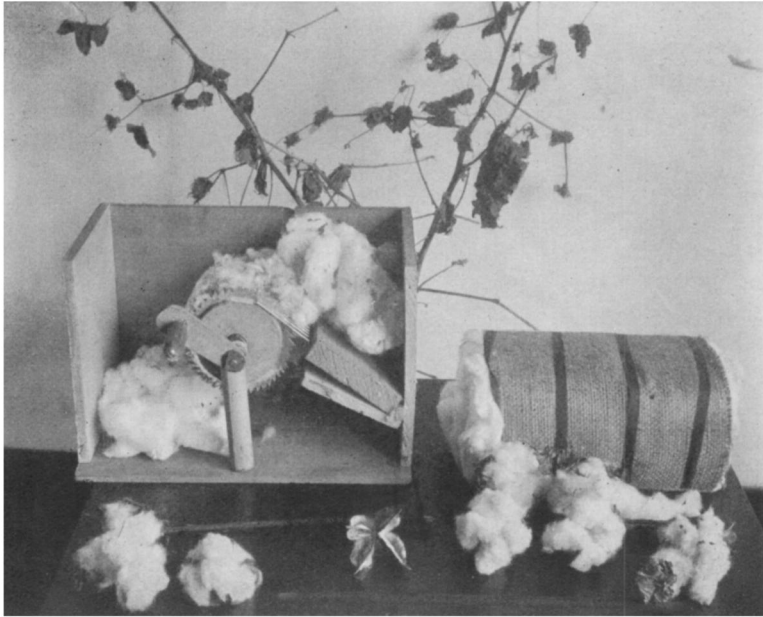


DIAGRAM OF ARKWRIGHT'S WATER FRAME FOR SPINNING

have made a cotton-gin to seed the cotton which we get "in the boll," unpicked, direct from the south. Thus they are brought in direct contact with the material and the machines. They "learn to do by doing," although the recitation is a very important part of the process of mastering the subject.

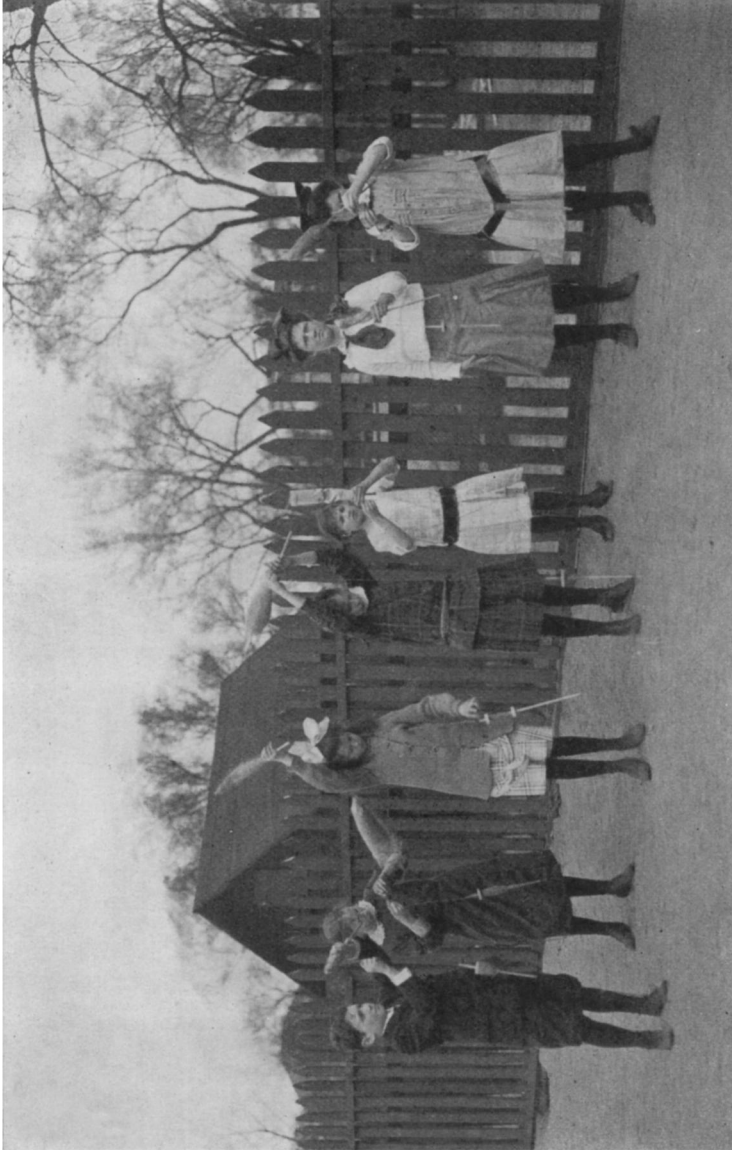
Excursions have been made to Tetzner's Warping Works, the Hull House Textile Museum, the Field Museum, and Fiedler Brothers' Braid Works.



COTTON GIN MADE BY PUPILS. COTTON PLANTS FROM SCHOOL GARDEN AND RIPE BOLLS FROM THE SOUTH



CHILDREN WEAVING



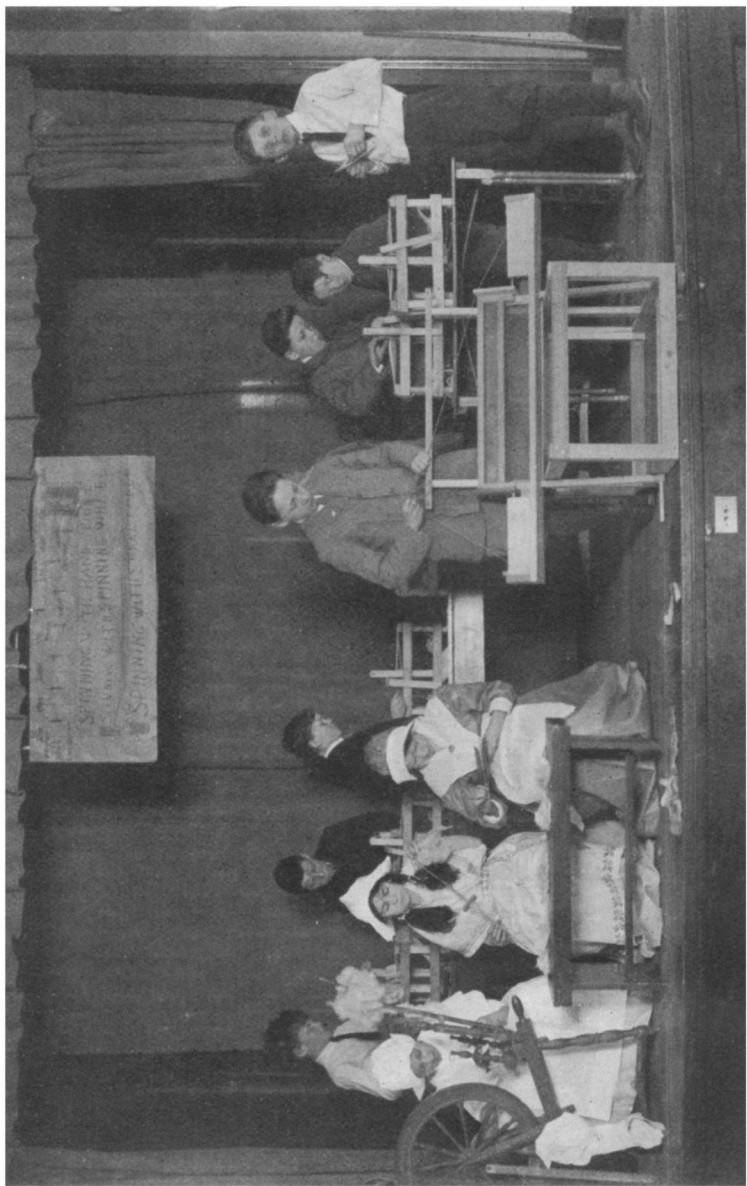
SPINNING FLAX BY HAND



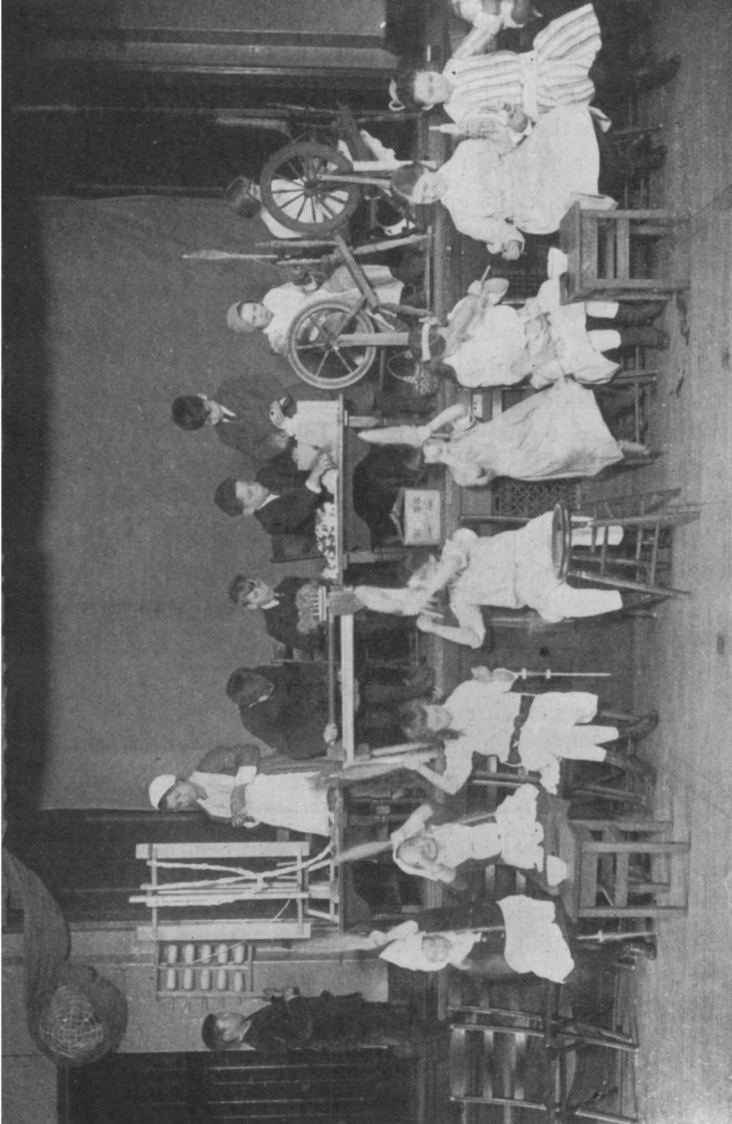
BOYS RUNNING COTTON THROUGH GIN MADE AFTER ELI WHITNEY'S SPECIFICATIONS. GIRL IN FOREGROUND PREPARING WARP. HAND-SPINNERS IN BACKGROUND



MORNING EXERCISE, 1913. LOOM FOR WEAVING LETTERS IN CENTER OF STAGE. KNITTING FRAME AT
EXTREME RIGHT IN FRONT



MORNING EXERCISE, 1914. FLY-SHUTTLE LOOM IN FOREGROUND AND SMALL LOOMS MADE BY PUPILS IN BACKGROUND



MORNING EXERCISE, 1915, ON THE PLATFORM FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: WARPING, SCUTCHING HECKLING, GINNING, SPINNING. IN FRONT ROW EIGHT GIRLS SPINNING

The work is taken up from the standpoint of the problem, how to overcome the difficulties of each particular process. Thus, the improvement in modern textile machinery began with John Kay's invention of the fly-shuttle loom in 1732. This so accelerated the weaving that the women folks of the household could not spin thread fast enough. The spinning-jenny was the result. The development is followed through the automatic loom and the power-loom; finally, some of the simpler points in machine spinning are studied.

These changes took the operation of the machine outside of the home. The increase of power, the multiplication of machinery, and the application of steam, made necessary the housing and operation in large factories. This change from the home industries to the factory system we trace in textiles, clothing, flour, meat-packing, leather, iron-working, etc. The industrial revolution, though one of the most far-reaching and important of social changes, is not too difficult to make clear enough for young children to begin to think about it.

No other line of handwork is so well adapted to children's interests and muscular capabilities as that in textiles of the home industries. The wooden machines they can re-make in the wood shop, and the simple skill in handling them even fifth-grade children readily acquire in a few weeks' time. This ensures real and lasting interest.

Each year we have tried to use the work of previous classes and to carry the work a step farther than the preceding year. The pictures of the class in morning exercises in successive years show what we succeeded in doing each year. Thus in 1913, we could not spin cotton, although we tried, and we had no flax, but we made a loom that would weave letters. We made a knitting-frame and a warping-frame. In 1914 we tried to make a fly-shuttle loom and succeeded only in demonstrating it, but not in weaving with it. In 1915 our flax crop was good, and we succeeded in really spinning on hand-spindles and on the spinning-wheel. We also made a cotton-gin. The fly-shuttle loom remains for its full realization to be worked out by next year's class.

